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SUBJECT:32ND UNGA: UK VIEWS ON ENERGY CONSULTATION

REF: USUN 4535

1. TRANSMITTED BELOW IS THE TEXT OF AN INTERNAL UK MISSION PAPER DISCUSSING THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSULTATIONS. IN DESCRIBING THE POSITION OF THE UK ON THIS ISSUE, UK MISOFF STATED THAT THEY WERE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN THE FRG (SEE REFTEL) AND SAW ADVANTAGES IN ESTABLISHING AN ENERGY DIALOGUE IN THE UN SYSTEM. HOWEVER, LIKE THE FRG, THEY WERE NOT INCLINED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN PROPOSING THAT THIS BE ONE OF THE SPECIFIC TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE OVERLIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VIEW MECHANISM.

2. QUOTE

THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSULTATIONS

SINCE THE EVENTS OF 1973-4 THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS

BECOME INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE CENTRAL POSITION WHICH ENERGY, AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT IS AVAILABLE, OCCUPIES IN THE WORLD ECONOMY. THERE IS A NEW AND WIDESPREAD RECOGNITION THAT ENERGY - LIKE ANY OTHER NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE - MUST BE USED RESPONSIBLY.

THE NATURAL FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION ON ENERGY MATTERS IS THE UNITED NATIONS. YET AT PRESENT CONSIDERATION OF THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT IS DIFFUSED AMONG SOME 15 BODIES IN THE UN FAMILY, EACH WITH ITS OWN SPECIALISED PREOCCUPATION. THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS HINDERS THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ACTIVITIES.

HOW WOULD ENERGY CONSULTATIONS BE OF GENERAL BENEFIT?

THE ENTIRE WORLD COMMUNITY WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE EXISTENCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION WHICH COULD UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

- (I) AN ASSESSMENT OF WORLD ENERGY RESOURCES;
- (II) A POOLING OF NATIONAL ENERGY STATISTICS LEADING TO BETTER
- UNDERSTOOD FORECASTS OF FUTURE WORLD ENERGY BALANCES;
- (III) A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ENERGY SUPPLY
- AND ECONOMIC GROWTH;
- (IV) A STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN TRANSITION FROM AN OIL-BASED ENERGY MIX TO AN ENERGY MIX PRIMARILY BASED ON MORE
- PERMANENT AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY;

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(V) ACTIVITIES PROMOTING A WIDER PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN ENERGY DECISIONS;

(VI) THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES AND IN ENERGY CONSERVATION.

HOW WOULD THE NON-OIL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BENEFIT?
IN ADDITION TO THE ACTIVITIES LISTED ABOVE, AN ENERGY
INSTITUTION MIGHT SERVE TO FACILITATE THE EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION
OF APPROPRIATE ELEMENTS OF THE ENERGY CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME
ENVISAGED BY THE CIEC. ACTIVITIES OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO
THE NON-OIL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MIGHT BE:(I) A STUDY OF THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS INHERENT IN THEIR SITUATION,
E.G. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS RESOURCES, THE IMPLICATIONS
OF AN INDUSTRIALISATION PROGRAMME, THE APPROPRIATENESS OF LOWCOST OR LABOUR-INTENSIVE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES;
(II) LINKING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE TO
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (FOR EXAMPLE, SOLAR ENERGY);
(III) CONSIDERATION OF HOW THEORETICAL AND TECHNICAL

A NEW INSTITUTION WOULD NOT NEED TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS IN ENERGY SUBJECTS MIGHT BEST BE MET.

IN THE CHANNELLING OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, GIVEN THE EXISTENCE OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE RANGE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES, AND ALSO THE AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT FUNDS.

HOW WOULD THE OIL PRODUCERS BENEFIT?
THE OIL PRODUCERS MIGHT RECEIVE PARTICULAR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR:(I) DEALING WITH THE ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF HIGH DEPENDENCE ON A DEPLETABLE RESOURCE;
(II) HANDLING THE TRANSITION TO A MORE DIVERSIFED ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL BASE.

HOW WOULD THE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES BENEFIT? LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE PRINCIPAL BENEFIT TO INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES WOULD BE IMPROVED APPRECIATION OF THE PROSPECTS OF FUTURE ENERGY SUPPLY AND DEMAND. ENERGY PRODUCTION IS HIGHLY CAPITAL INTENSIVE, AND INVESTMENT IN IT INVOLVES LONG LEAD TIMES. WRONG DECISIONS COULD EASILY HAMPER THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES WITH SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR WORLD TRADE IN GENERAL. THERE WOULD BE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS IN SO FAR AS CONSULTATIONS LED TO COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TO INCREASE SUPPLIES OF BOTH CONVENTIONAL AND RENEWABLE ENERGY AND TO IMPROVED MEANS OF ENERGY CONSERVATION.

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